

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 29869 171606Z

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DEPT PLEASE PASS COMMERCE FOR NOAA' NSF AND NRL

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TAGS: TECH, FR

SUBJECT: PROPOSED MULTILATERAL RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE
ACOUSTIC BEHAVIOR OF LARGE MARINE MAMMALS

1. SUMMARY. THE FRENCH MFA HOSTED A MEETING TO REVIEW
PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR AN EXPEDITION TO A REGION NORTH
OF HUDSON BAY TO STUDY THE ACOUSTIC BEHAVIOR OF LARGE
MARINE MAMMALS (PARTICULARLY THE BALEINE AND NARVAL
WHALES). THE PRINCIPAL SCIENTISTS INVOLVED ARE
HOWARD WINN, PROFESSOR OF OCEANOGRAPHY OF THE UNIVER-
SITY OF RHODE ISLAND, DR. PETER BEAMISH, BEDFORD
INSTITUTE OF OCEANOGRAPHY OF HALIFAX, CANADA, AND
PROFESSOR RENE GUY BUSNEL, DIRECTOR OF THE BIOACOUSTICS
LABORATORY AT THE INRA LABORATORY OF JOUY-EN-JOSAS. AN
EXPEDITION IN 1976 WILL PROBABLY BE SPONSORED BY THE
CANADIANS, AND EXPEDITIONS FOR THE SUMMERS OF 1977 AND
-78 ARE HOPEFULLY TO BE SUPPORTED BY FRENCH, AMERICAN,
AND CANADIAN SPONSORS. END SUMMARY

. ON OCTOBER 23 THE SCIENCE BUREAU OF THE FRENCH
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SPONSORED A MEETING WHICH
INCLUDED THE EMBASSY SCIATT AND THE SCIENCE COUNSELOR
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PAGE 02 PARIS 29869 171606Z

OF THE CANADIAN EMBASSY. THE MEETING FOCUSED ON SUR-

VEYING THE PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR AN EXPEDITION TO A REGION NORTH OF HUDSON BAY TO STUDY THE ACOUSTIC BEHAVIOR OF LARGE MARINE MAMMALS (PARTICULARLY THE BALEINE AND NARVAL WHALES). THE THREE PRINCIPAL SCIENTISTS INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED PROJECT ARE: DR. HOWARD WINN, PROFESSOR OF OCEANOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND; DR. PETER BEAMISH, BEDFORD INSTITUTE OF OCEANOGRAPHY, HALIFAX, CANADA; AND PROFESSOR RENE GUY BUSNEL, DIRECTOR, BIOACOUSTICS LABORATORY, INRA LABORATORY, JOUY-EN-JOSAS.

3. THE PROJECT HAS SEVERAL OBJECTIVES: TO STUDY THE BEHAVIOR OF SOME IMPORTANT ENDANGERED SPECIES (E.G., THE BALEINE WHALE); TO PROBE THE ACOUSTIC MECHANISMS USED BY THE LARGEST NON-MEAT-EATING MAMMALS TO FIND LARGE QUANTITIES OF SEA NUTRIENTS NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THEIR LIVES; TO STUDY THE HIGHLY DIRECTIONAL SONAR SYSTEMS USED BY THE NARVAL WHALE, WHICH COULD HAVE IMPORTANT APPLICATIONS TO SUBMARINE SONAR SYSTEMS; AND TO USE SENSOR-TRANSMITTER-CARRYING WHALES AS INSTRUMENT PLATFORMS FOR CONTINUOUS REPORTING OF UP TO 14 OCEAN QUALITY PARAMETERS, E.G., TEMPERATURE, SALINITY, ETC. THE CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE PROJECT INCLUDES AN INITIAL TWO-MONTH EXPEDITION IN 1976, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE FULLY SUPPORTED BY CANADA. FOLLOWING EXPEDITIONS WILL BE HELD IN THE SUMMERS OF 1977 AND -78 HOPEFULLY FOR FOUR MONTHS' DURATION AND POSSIBLY SUPPORTED BY FRENCH, AMERICAN, AND CANADIAN AGENCIES. THE ESTIMATE OF COSTS FOR THESE EXPEDITIONS DEPENDS ON THE DEGREE OF SOPHISTICATION OF THE WORK AND STUDIES TO BE ACCOMPLISHED AND THE TYPE OF SUPPORTING SHIP TO BE EMPLOYED. A MINIMUM COST WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY \$100,000 FOR EACH OF TWO YEARS; TOTAL COSTS WOULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER IF A LARGER SHIP WERE TO BE USED FOR THE EXPEDITIONS.

4. THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS INDICATED THAT THEY HOPED SEVERAL DIFFERENT AGENCIES FROM THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, AND FRANCE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING SOME ASPECT OF THEIR PROPOSED PROJECT. THEY EXPRESSED HOPE THAT AS FAR AS US AGENCIES WERE CONCERNED, NOAA, THE OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH, AND THE NATIONAL SCIENCE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 PARIS 29869 171606Z

FOUNDATION WOULD FIND THEIR PROJECT OF INTEREST. AT THE PRESENT TIME PRELIMINARY PROPOSALS ARE BEING PREPARED ALONG WITH A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANS OF THE PROJECT. COPIES OF THESE DOCUMENTS WILL BE SENT TO INTERESTED PARTIES PERHAPS WITHIN THE NEXT ONE OR TWO MONTHS.

5. ACTION: PLEASE ADVISE IF THESE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGA-

TORS HAVE MADE THEIR PROJECT KNOWN TO USG AGENCIES AND
ANY INTENTION ON THE PART OF THOSE AGENCIES TO SUPPORT
SOME PORTION OF THEIR PROPOSED PROGRAM.
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